



**STATE OF GEORGIA**  
**Division of Family and Children Services**

**Nathan Deal**  
Governor

**Bobby D. Cagle**  
Director

September 25, 2015

**FOOD STAMP PROGRAM MANUAL TRANSMITTAL NO. 40**

**TO:** Regional Directors, County Department of Family and Children Services,  
State Office Staff

**FROM:** Bobby D. Cagle, MSW  
DFCS Director

**RE:** Food Stamp Program Manual Transmittal 40

The purpose of this transmittal is to provide policy updates to the Food Stamp Program income limits, standard deductions, excess shelter deduction and maximum and minimum allotments based on the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) cost of living adjustments (COLA) for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2016. The Food Stamp Program's COLA changes are effective October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016.

This transmittal also provides policy updates to the excess medical deduction processing procedures. Georgia has been approved to operate a Standard Medical Deduction (SMD) Project designed to test program changes that will increase benefits to households with elderly or disabled household members. The demonstration project has been approved for a 4-year period, beginning October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2019. The project will utilize a standard medical deduction in the amount of \$185 and will allow elderly or disabled clients with medical expenses in excess of \$35 to claim a standard medical deduction of \$185.

The policy revisions include:

- Recent updates to the Food Stamp Program COLA changes effective October 1, 2015.
- The most current Basis of Issuance (BOI) Tables for FFY 2016 (October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016).
- Implementation of the standard medical deduction for elderly/disabled households with medical expenses over \$35 per month. All eligible participating households will be converted to the standard medical deduction effective October 1, 2015. All eligible applicant households will have the \$185 standard medical deduction applied at application.
- Revisions to Form 173A (Rev. 08/15), Form 173A-SP (Rev. 08/15), Form 296 (Rev. 10/15), Form 296SP (Rev. 10/15), Form 339 (Rev. 09/15), Form 339SP (Rev. 09/15) and Form 297A (Rev. 07/14).

The Form 297A has been translated in the following 15 languages: Arabic, Bosnian, Burmese, Chinese, Farsi, French, Gujarati, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Nepali, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish and Vietnamese.